

THE NEW Amberola Graphic

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WINTER 1975

No. 12

Early U.S. Dance Orchestras - Part 1 by David L. Jones

This will be the first installment of a series on the little known and seldom remembered dance orchestras of the past. We hope that it will be of interest and help to all who are interested in instrumental rather than vocal artists, especially of the period before 1920. - D.L.J.

Julius Lenzberg

One of the early popular dance orchestras to come into prominence immediately after World War One was the Lenzberg "Riverside" Orchestra. Originally intended to replace the aging and somewhat "dinosaurian" Jaudas Society Orchestra, Lenzberg first appeared on the Edison label in 1919. The Jaudas Society Orchestra had been the chief purveyor of popular dance music on Edison from 1915, but by 1919 was totally out of place. World War I changed all that and the public now demanded color and originality in what they danced to. Julius Lenzberg was more than qualified to do so. He had composed three songs, among them "Some Baby," "Operatic Rag" and his most notable, "Hungarian Rag."

Most likely a staff musician with Edison, Lenzberg played violin. I had originally thought him to be a trombonist, as many of his later records feature an excellent one at that, but in the 1920 Edison Blue Amberola Record catalogue, there is a single photograph of him and one of his orchestra as well. The instrumentation was at that time the following: 2 each: trumpets (possible cornets) and violins; the rest were 1 each: trombone, alto saxophone, clarinet, flute, piano and drummer/xylophonist. In the later post-Edison records, the flute was replaced by an

other saxophone, the xylophone was dropped and a banjo added.

The Edison records were usually all of the most popular songs of the day and the orchestra played in a "carnival" type of style that was totally carefree and uninhibited. Listening to some of these Edisons gave me the impression of being on a merry-go-round. The Lenzberg stay at Edison was approximately about two years, the last records being recorded in 1921. Some, however, appear to have been issued through all of 1921 and possibly into 1922 with some of the Blue Amberola Cylinders. On this note it is sad to say that many of the Lenzberg records on cylinder were not on Diamond Disc, and vice versa. Two of the best BA's were #4115, "Dance-O-Mania" and "Speed" on 4190. Neither were ever issued on Diamond Disc. On the other hand, Diamond Disc #50715, "The Wedding Blues" was not on BA either. This is one of the slight irritations, and not much can be done about it. Possibly this could be why Lenzberg left Edison, but then who knows?

Lenzberg's popularity must have been rather considerable because in 1921 we have him on no less than a half-dozen labels. The next label he appears on after departing Edison was the short lived American "Odeon" Company. This label had all their (cont. page 3)

THE NEW AMBEROLA GRAPHIC

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 back issues) nos. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 - 25¢ each

To Our Readers

We are very pleased to report that 1974 was a good year for The New Amberola Phonograph Co., thanks to all our friends and customers. For the first time since we revived our business two years ago, NAPCO is operating in the black. The future year looks bright and we will try to offer additional items of interest to collectors.

Several of you have made comments about the GRAPHIC and our reprints over the past year. Although it has not been possible to respond to all of you individually, we appreciate your remarks, suggestions and criticisms immensely.

Renewals - When a subscription expires we automatically include a renewal notice with the last issue. This is the only notice we are able to give our subscribers; a separate reminder can not be sent due to the added postage.

Our Christmas cards were a great success and they have completely been sold out. After we had sent out about 20 packages we discovered that some of the cards had been poorly folded. We hope nobody got stuck with any of these! Next Christmas we will publish another design, taking into consideration various suggestions that have been made - including an earlier announcement of their availability than this past fall.

Many of you are anxious to have the Amberol series completed. In our next issue we'll include at least three pages, which should speed things along. We wish to remind you that these pages may be removed from the GRAPHIC for separate binding.

Hope you like our illustrations. Rather than try to fit a picture in with an article, which doesn't always work satisfactorily, we'll put them all together as we did with this issue. (cont. on page 10)

(cont. from page 1)

matrices recorded by Okeh, but I don't believe that Okeh ever issued them on records of their own make. It was sort of what Columbia did with Harmony and Velvet Tone. At any rate all of these records were issued as Julius Lenzberg's Harmonists, and I feel they were the "High Point" of his career. Superbly arranged, brilliantly played and recorded by Okeh's remarkable lateral recording technique, which was as close to Edison's as was then possible by anyone, these records are just plain unbelievable. Played on modern stereo equipment with a proper stylus, you get the impression of being right there with Julius and the boys. These records easily compare with the high quality of Wiedoeft's Californians, Lanin's Roseland, and Bennie Krueger's Orchestrass, who were among the finest dance orchestrass of the early 1920's.

Late in 1921, Lenzberg began to appear on labels of the Paramount family, i.e.: Puritan, Banner, Broadway and the scarce Clarion issues, not to be confused with the Columbia "Clarion" records of 1930-32. He was also on Bell-Arto-Cleartone series, but since I've only seen two, I don't know to what extent. The output of the Paramount group was considerable, and on many of the big numbers of the day Arthur Hall sang the vocals. I believe that Lenzberg's was one of the first dance orchestras to use a singer of any kind on a regular basis, at so early a date. Few if any Victor or Columbias did so at that time. On the Arto-Cleartones I have they are labeled just "Julius Lenzberg and His Orchestra." The Paramounds for the most part are "Lenzberg's Riverside Orchestra," but the last records that appear early in 1922 are labeled "Lenzberg's Midnight Frolic Orchestra." Perhaps he was employed by Ziegfeld and he liked the stay, because after 1922 his name appears no more and his subsequent fate is unknown.

I would like to ask that if anyone has any records by Julius Lenzberg to sell or trade I'd be very happy to acquire them. We have included a discography of several Lenzberg records, but are sure there are others. (Dave has the numbers that are underlined, and would therefore need those that are not as well as those not listed below.)

Comments are welcome. Next artist will be Paul Biese. Thank you-

Dave Jones

116 Constitution Circle
Clairton, Pa. 15025
(1-412-233-8146)

D.D. #	<u>Edisons</u>	B.A. #
50567	- Razzle-Dazzle - One-Step	3792
50567	- In My Daddy's Arms - Fox Trot	3806
50573	- Tiger Rose Waltzes	3799
50593	- Taxi - One-Step	3864
50628	- Pretty Little Rainbow - Waltz	3954
50632	- Who Wants a Baby - Medley Fox Trot	3944
50645	- Karavan - Fox Trot	3983
50658	- Buddha - Medley Fox Trot	3973
50662	- Rose of Washington Square - Fox Trot	4027
50665	- Swanee - One-Step	4034
50665	- Venetian Moon - One-Step	4014
50679	- A Young Man's Fancy - Fox Trot	4095
N/A	- Manyana - Fox Trot	4106
N/A	- Dance-O-Mania - Fox Trot	4115
50696	- Amorita - Fox Trot	4137
50697	- Buddies - Waltz	3998
50711	- Feather Your Nest - Fox Trot	4166
50713	- If a Wish Could Make It So - Medley Fox Trot	N/A
50715	- Wedding Blues - Fox Trot	N/A
N/A	- Speed - One-Step	4190

4. 50733 - Why Don't You - Fox Trot
 ? - Grieving for You - Medley Fox Trot
 ? - Caresses - Fox Trot
 50742 - Answer - Fox Trot / Sweet Love - Fox Trot
 50756 - I Like It - Medley Fox Trot
 50759 - Come and Nestle in Your Daddy's Arms - Fox Trot
 50793 - Wait Until You See My Madeline - Fox Trot
 50793 - Tea Cup Girl - Fox Trot

American Odeon - 1921

N/A
4223
4231
N/A
4267
4279
N/A
4465

- 20046 - Dinn Danny (Irish Hickey Hoola) - Fox Trot
 20053 - Every Girl Wants to be a Sally - Fox Trot
 20058 - Toddle - Fox Trot
 20082 - I Want Love - Fox Trot

Paramount Group

- mx. 768 - All By Myself - F.T. (Vocal: Arthur Hall) - Paramount 20063,
 Banner 1018, Puritan 11063, Clarion 1103
 mx. 769 - Ain't We Got Fun - F.T. (Vocal: Arthur Hall) - Par. 20063,
 Puritan 11063
 mx. 933 - Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes - F.T. (Voc: A. Hall)
 Par. 20081, Pur. 11081, Banner 1001
 mx. 934 - I've Got My Habits On - F.T. (Voc: A. Hall) - Banner 1000
 mx. 935 - Wabash Blues - Fox Trot - Par. 20081, Pur. 11081, Banner 1000
 mx. - Ma! - F.T. (Voc: A. Hall) - Par. 20071, B'way 11071, Ban. 1013
 mx. - Just Like a Rainbow - F.T. - Banner 1013 //Ban. 1045
 mx. 990 - Boo Hoo Hoo - F.T. (Voc: A. Hall) - Par. 20107, Pur. 11107,
 mx. 991 - Virginia Blues - F.T. (Voc: Arthur Hall) - Par. 20107,
 Pur. 11107, Banner 1045, Mastertone 1010

Miscellaneous

- Okeh 4461 - Gypsy Blues / Brother Low Down
 Arto 9064 - Cherie - F.T. / Vamping Rose - F.T. (also Cleartone P-64)
 Arto 9085 - Oh! Me; Oh! My / Sweetheart
 Grey Gull 1086 - Yoo Hoo - F.T. / Dapper Dan - F.T.
 Grey Gull 1087 - South Sea Isle

COLLECTORS' RECORDS

The International Family

by Bill Bryant

In issues #7 and 8 of the Graphic I asked readers for any information they might have relating to a number of record labels and the companies which produced them. Many of you responded and kindly took the time to jot down numbers and titles from examples of these obscure makes that were in your collections. I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly thank you for your efforts which, I hope, will benefit all of us when enough information becomes available to enable us to publish it. Some correspondents wondered about some of the names included in my list. Many labels were unfamiliar to them and, I suspect, probably to the majority of collectors. It occurred to me that, while I still don't have enough material available on many of them to make a "book-length" article practical, it might be well to outline my limited knowledge and show an illustration of the label itself for the educational value it might have.

The first candidate for "treatment" is the International label, produced by the International Record Co. of Auburn, New York. The parent company, Auburn Button Works, began pressing Zon-O-Phone records under contract to that company as early as 1902 and was apparently stimulated to begin producing its own brand shortly after. In addition to manufacturing International Records, the company also provided independent con-

cerns, such as department stores, with an opportunity to have their "own" brand of record for sale by means of special labels that would be printed on demand. For example, International masters can be found on records with such labels as Apollo (The Shepard Co.), Central (Central Camera Co., Chicago), Clear Tone, Clico (The Clinton-Close Co.), Duplex (also known as Kalamazoo--the names coming from the Duplex talking machine and its city of manufacture), Eagle, Excelsior, Faultless Concert Record (John M. Smyth Co.), Lyric, The Nightingale, Ormsby (Boston Talking Machine Co.), Siegel-Cooper, Square Deal (A. D. Matthew's Sons), and Vim. Most of these are "department-store labels", i.e., they were sold by stores who were entitled to put their own label on records actually manufactured by a record company under contract, in this case, International Record Co. There are undoubtedly other labels that drew upon International matrices for their material as well. In time we hope to present illustrations and a little background information on many of these.

A February, 1906 advertisement gives the corporate address as International Record Co., 40 Washington St., Auburn, N.Y. and mentions that the records were retailed for 40¢ each, making them one of the cheapest brands on the market at the time (all discs were single-sided). Eventually International maintained its recording studio (or "laboratory" as it was usually called) in New York and may have originally manufactured some discs there as well, although by October of 1905 pressing was being done in Auburn.

The accompanying cut is of the only International Record I've been fortunate enough to come across so far (although I do have specimens of some of the other makes in my collection). Unfortunately, a black-and-white reproduction cannot do justice to one of the most colorful and handsome labels ever designed. The background is pale yellow with the encircling ring and the words "International Record" in red. The title information and legend at the bottom are in black--it appears that the title may be rubber-stamped. But the eagle and bunting are in full color, or as nearly so as could be reproduced by lithography. The effect is quite pleasing and makes for a label that one is more likely to hang on the wall than store on a shelf!

Physically, records found with the International label have so-called "sunken labels" which are molded into a depression in the center area of the disc, much in the manner of most Victor records. The same is true of the single Clear Tone record seen, but all other varieties produced by International seem to have labels that are flush with the surface of the record. All 10" discs seen of all types lack any kind of protective rings like those frequently used on Columbia products. However, in the case of smaller-diameter Excelsior discs, a ring or ridge is usually found around the circumference of the record. This is a result of the original matrix having been increased in size from eight inches to about eight and three-quarters inches by grafting on a narrow band around the outside edge. The original eight inch discs were made for the Talk-O-Phone Co. of Toledo, Ohio (which will be covered in more depth in a future article). Later, when the trend away from small-diameter discs was increasing, it was apparently thought advisable to "give the customer more for his money" by making the smaller discs larger! All the "increased size" discs found so far have borne Excelsior labels, however, despite the fact that they are pressed from Talk-O-Phone plates and are usually announced as such. Presumably the scheme was not well founded, for "normal" ten-inch Excelsior discs, presumably pressed later (and bearing the added legend "New Process" on their otherwise identical labels) are more frequently found.

It seems that International Records were first numbered in a block

6.

system, but it's obvious that not all the blocks have yet been discovered. These are the ones thus far (all 10" size discs):

300 - band (sometimes credited to Metropolitan Band, G. Poluso, director)

600 - orchestra (Poluso's Orchestra)

700 or 750 - brass quartette, with organ (750 the lowest found)

1200 - male quartette

1300 - male quartette specialties (descriptive selections) (the only ensemble so far found in this series is "The Ramblers")

1500 - vocal solos (ballads, Italian songs, comic and popular songs)

1600 - continuation of 1500s.

1800 - ??? (known to have been used, but type of material unknown)

1900 - female vocal? (Ada Jones and Jeannette Goddard)

2000 - popular songs (Murray, Harlan, etc.)

2100 - possibly a continuation of 2000 series, although by 2150
duets seem to predominate; artists are Harlan & Stanley
and Collins & Harlan)

2500 - specialties? (Spencer & Hunter or Len Spencer solos)

2700 - Jones & Spencer (the only artists identified so far)

There are so few titles represented in some of the above groups that it's not even certain that they do constitute a block. In fact, some of these series may be numerical. The limited knowledge of this label that I have at present makes it impossible to say. However, it does seem apparent that at least when number 3000 was reached, the company embarked upon a strictly numerical list of new issues. About twenty-five selections were issued a month in the 3000 series (sometimes as many as twenty-seven); the first issue, 3001, was announced in April of 1906. The last item that was advertised in Talking Machine World, #3211, appeared in the October, 1906 issue; the highest known so far is 3351, apparently issued the following year. The artists in this series include such favorites as Voss L. Ossman, Billie (sic) Golden, Alan Turner, Dan W. Quinn, Len Spencer, George P. Watson, Ada Jones, Arthur Collins, Byron G. Harlan, Joe Belmont, Harry Tally, Leo Zimmerman, and Billy Murray. But then there are the people who, if, indeed, existed under the names which the International catalogue ascribed to them, apparently made no other records, or very few of them. Included in the gallery are the Metropolitan Band of New York, J. Wolfe (xylophone), John Dolan (cornet), William Fredericks (baritone), Ellen Strang (soprano?), G. Fortunato (piccolo), Jeannette Goddard (soprano), and William C. Wood (tenor) and the Metropolis Four! Of that list, William Fredericks and John Dolan are the only names known to me from another label--the former made a very few Columbia discs; the latter, at least one Imperial.

Late in 1908 the American Graphophone Co. (makers of Columbia records) sought an injunction against the International Record Co. and Leeds & Catlin Co. for manufacturing and selling records in violation of the Jones patent which Columbia held. A restraining order was granted on Nov. 23, 1908, but it was suspended to give the companies time to appeal the decision. The order was reinstated on April 17 of the following year when the court decided against the claims offered by Leeds & Catlin. As far as collectors are concerned, however, International effectively ended operations in November of 1908 when production ceased. That the records are difficult to find today is to put it mildly. Most of the examples I have found have come to me one at a time, and very slowly at that. It may be that the discs did not sell well originally, despite their cheap price. Their sonic quality leaves

(concluded on back page)



to accompany How IT WORKS

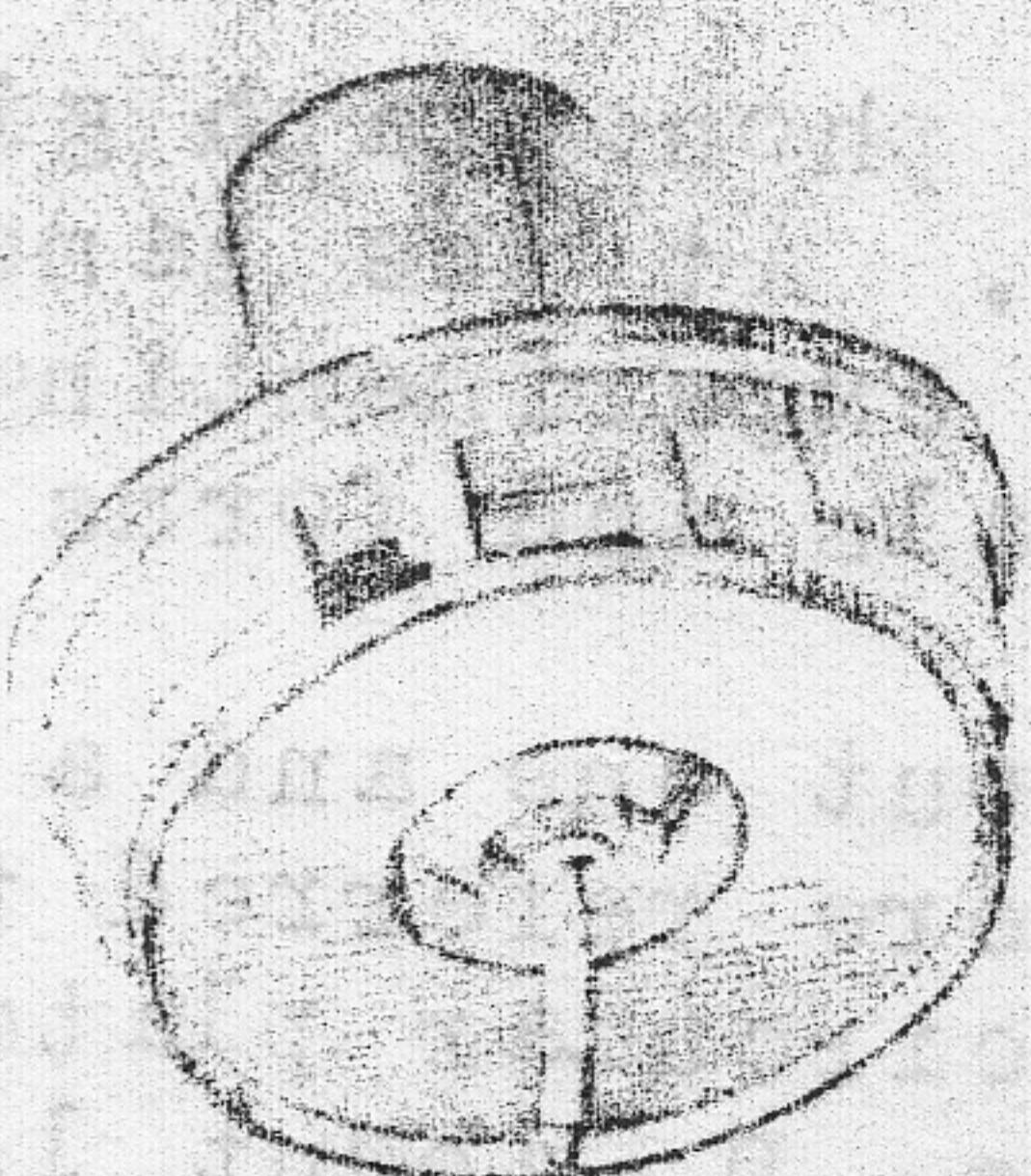


FIG. 148.—Perspective view of a phonograph recorder.

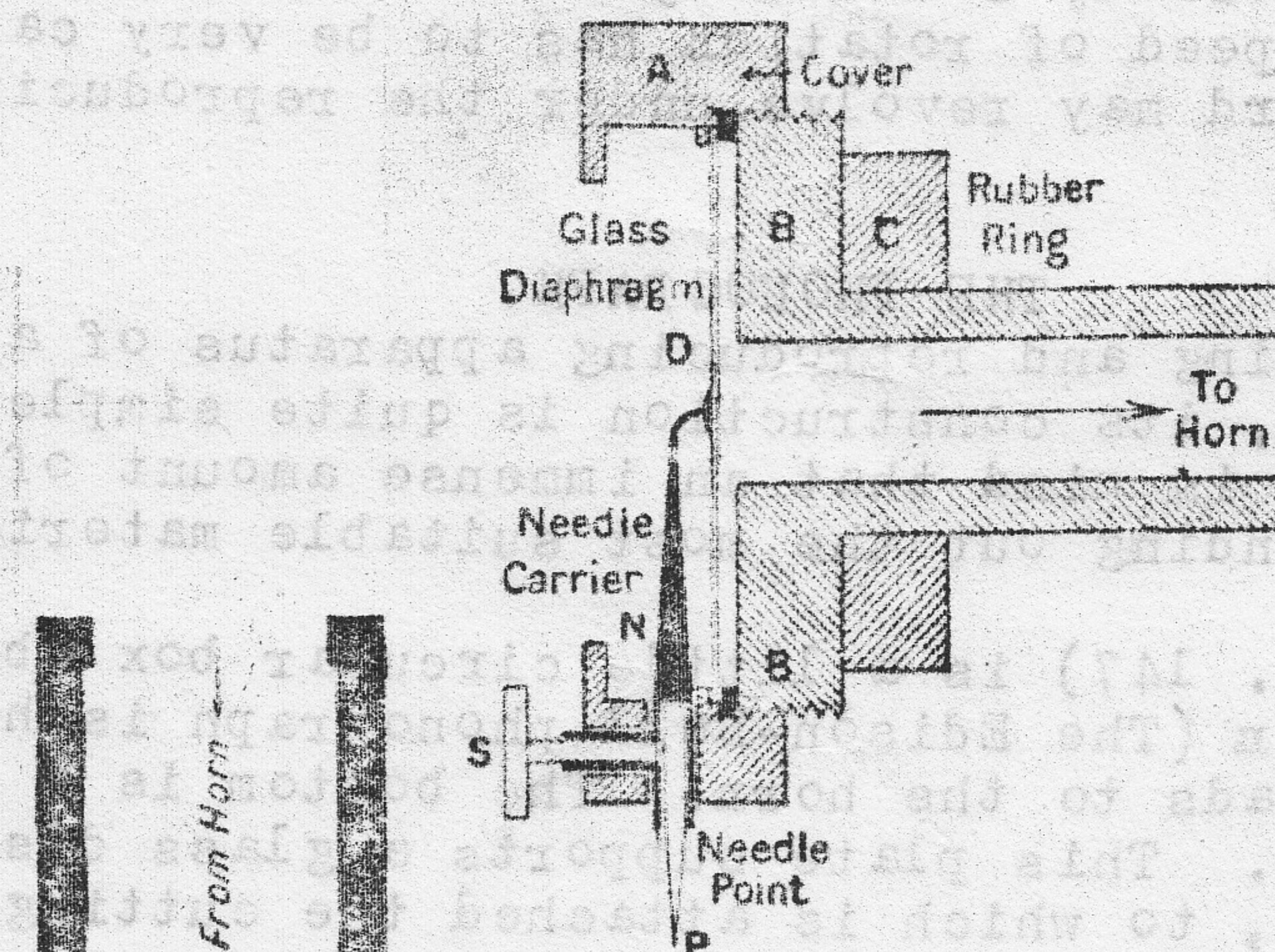


FIG. 151c.—Section of a gramophone reproducer.

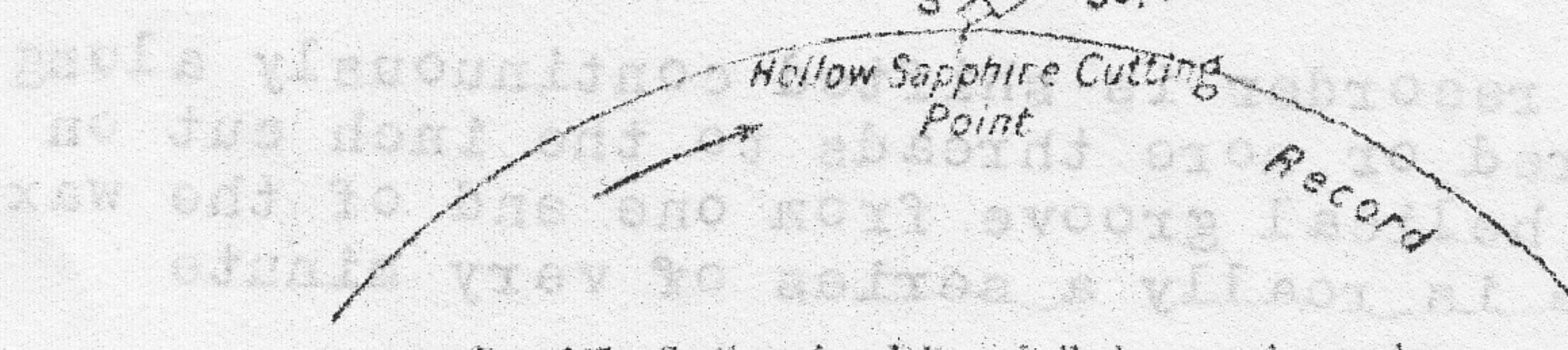
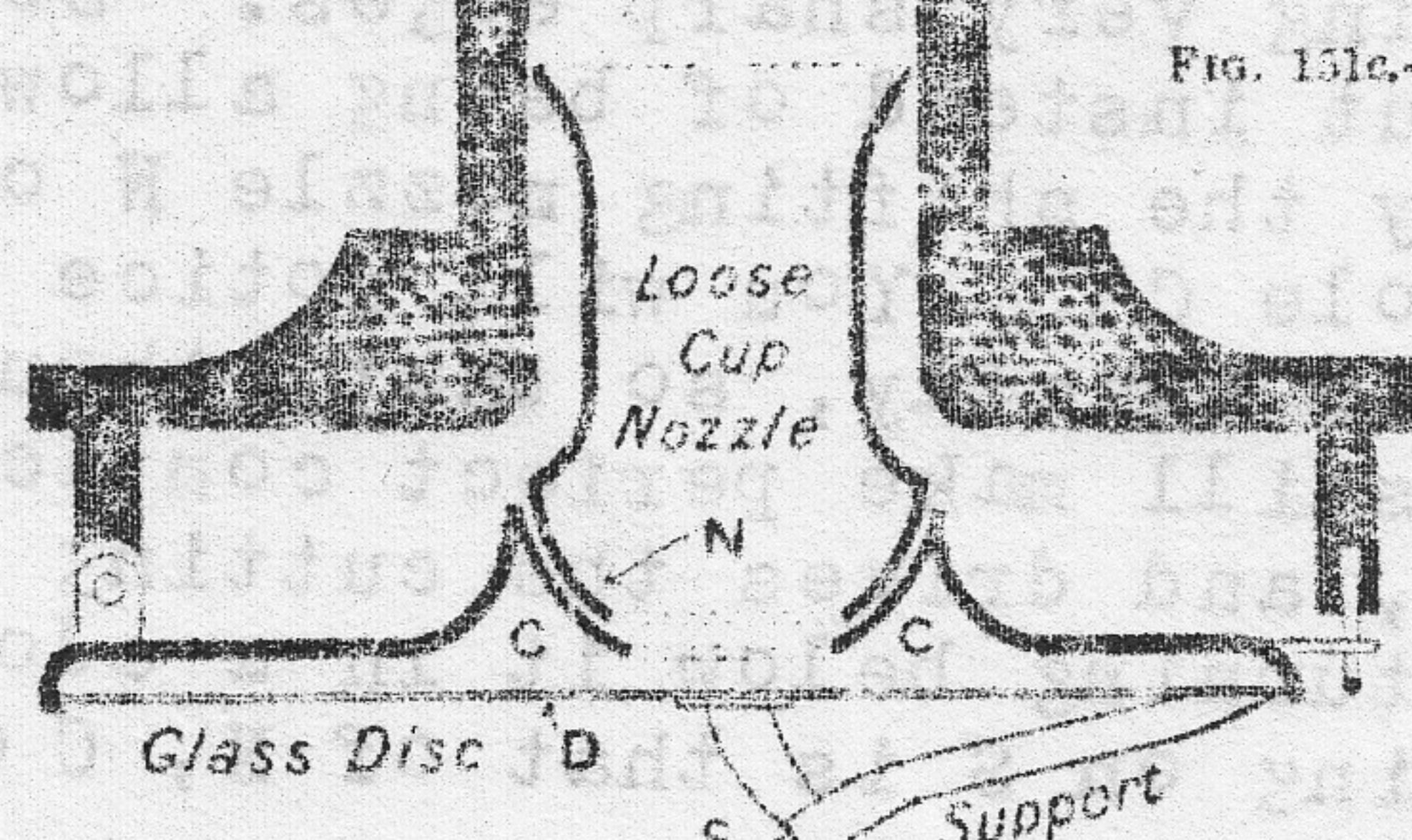


FIG. 147.—Section of an Edison Bell phonograph recorder.

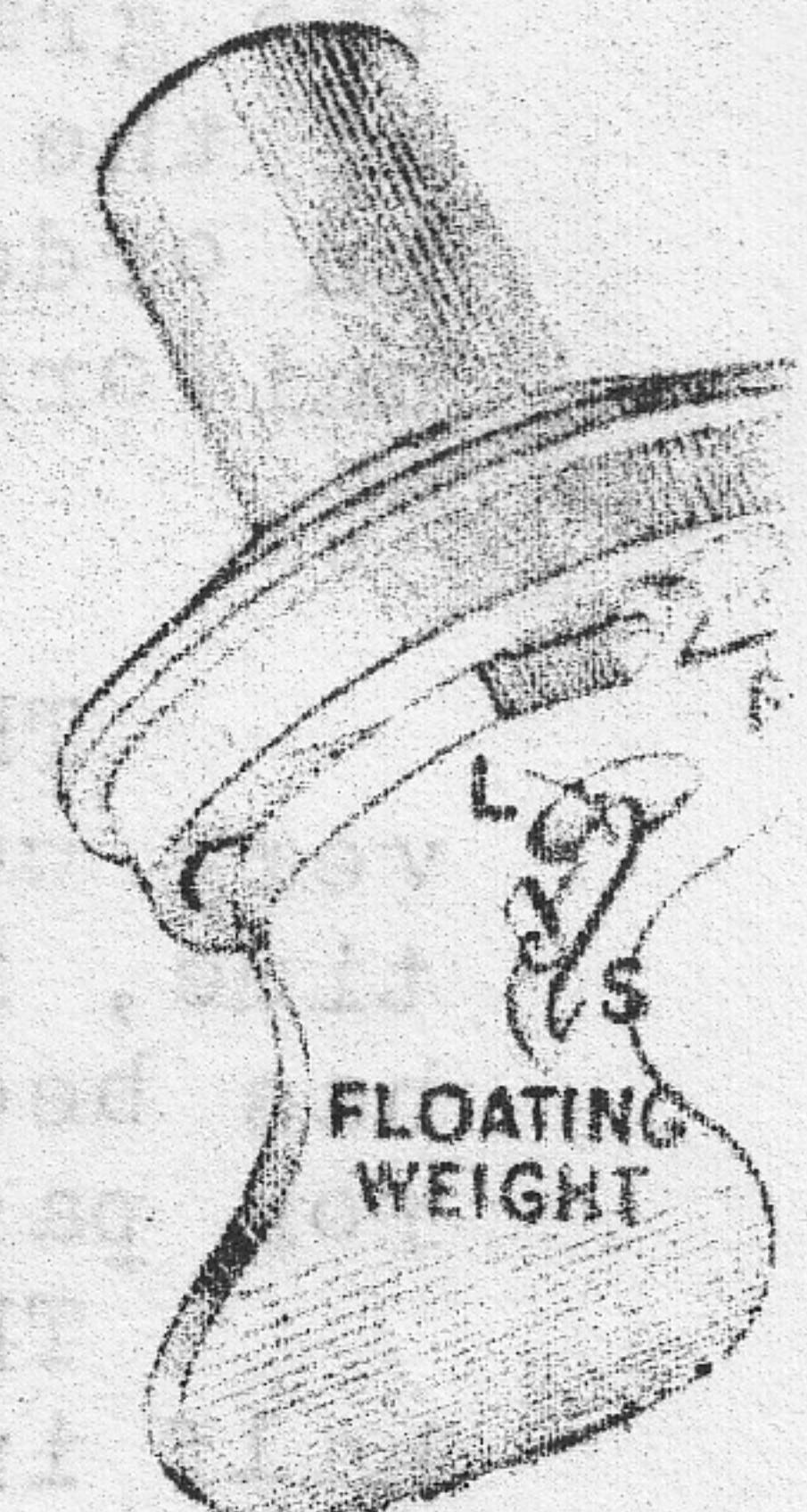


FIG. 150.—Perspective view of a photograph reproducer.

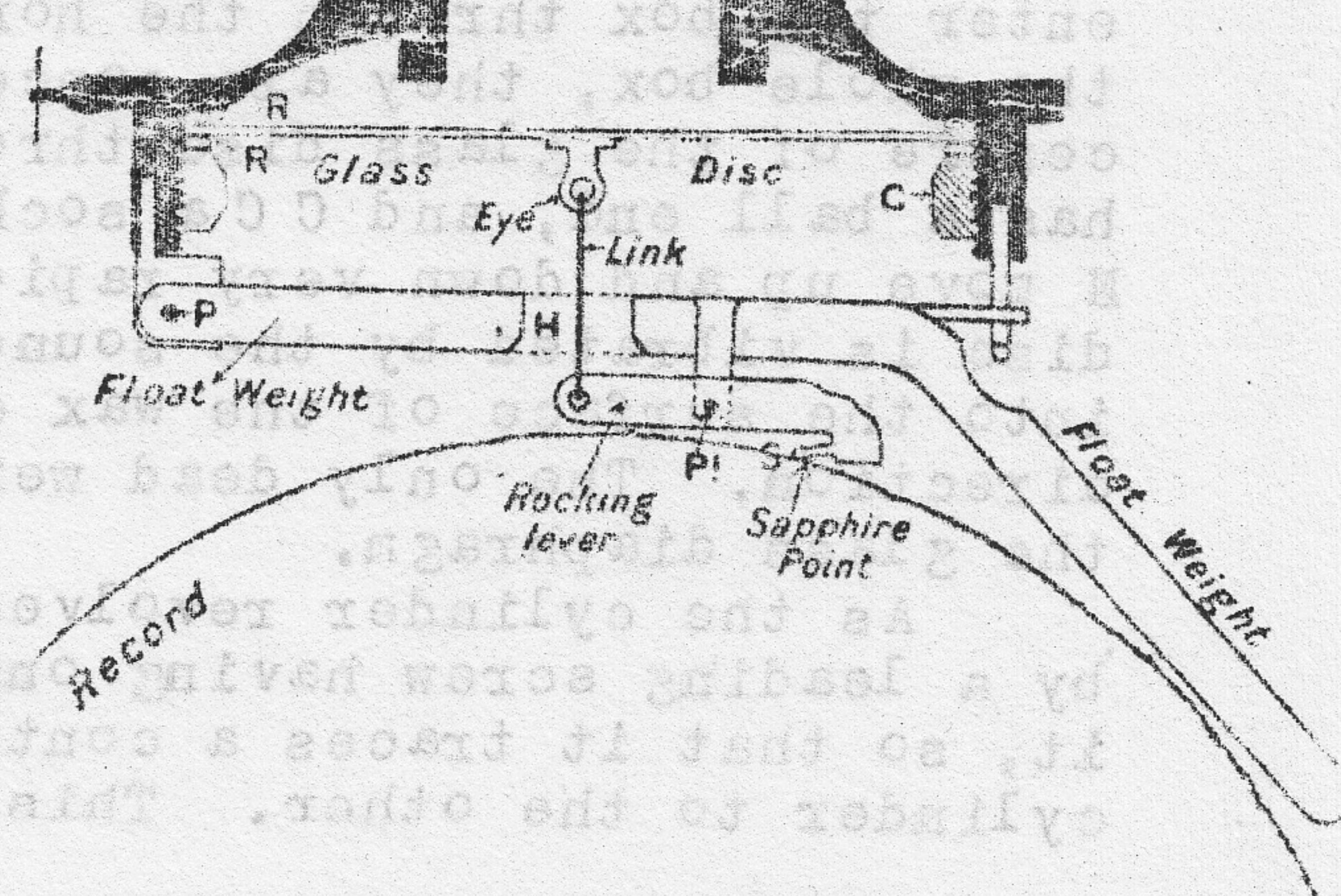


FIG. 149.—Section of the reproducer of an Edison Bell phonograph.

HOW IT WORKS

Chapter XVI TALKING-MACHINES

(From the book How It Works, published in London, circa. 1904. Jim Tennyson has furnished us with the text of the chapter on talking machines. Especially interesting is the description of the gold moulding process. Certain lengthy passages have been omitted.)

In the Patent Office Museum at South Kensington is a curious little piece of machinery—a metal cylinder mounted on a long axle, which has at one end a screw thread chased along it. The screw end rotates in a socket with a thread of equal pitch cut in it. To the other end is attached a handle. On an upright near the cylinder is mounted a sort of drum. The membrane of the drum carries a needle, which, when the membrane is agitated by the air-waves set up by human speech, digs into a sheet of tinfoil wrapped round the cylinder, pressing it into a helical groove turned on the cylinder from end to end. This construction is the first phonograph ever made. Thomas Edison, the "wizard of the West," devised it in 1876; and from this rude parent have descended the beautiful machines which record and reproduce human speech and musical sounds with startling accuracy.

We do not propose to trace here the development of the talking-machine; nor will it be necessary to describe in detail its mechanism, which is probably well known to most readers, or could be mastered in a very short time on personal examination. We will content ourselves with saying that the wax cylinder of the phonograph, or the ebonite disc of the gramophone, is generally rotated by clockwork concealed in the body of the machine. The speed of rotation has to be very carefully governed, in order that the record may revolve under the reproducing point at a uniform speed.

THE PHONOGRAPH.

Though the recording and reproducing apparatus of a phonograph gives very wonderful results, its construction is quite simple. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that an immense amount of experimenting has been devoted to finding out the most suitable materials and forms for parts.

The recorder (Fig. 147) is a little circular box about one and a half inches in diameter (The Edison-Bell phonograph is here referred to.) From the top a tube leads to the horn. The bottom is a circular plate, CC, hinged at one side. This plate supports a glass disc, D, about $\frac{1}{150}$ th of an inch thick, to which is attached the cutting stylus—a tiny sapphire rod with a cup-shaped end having very sharp edges. Sound-waves enter the box through the horn tube; but instead of being allowed to fill the whole box, they are concentrated by the shifting nozzle N on to the centre of the glass disc through the hole CC. You will notice that N has a ball end, and CC a socket to fit N exactly, so that, though CC and N move up and down very rapidly, they still make perfect contact. The disc is vibrated by the sound-impulses, and drives the cutting point down into the surface of the wax cylinder, turning below it in a clockwork direction. The only dead weight pressing on S is that of N, CC, and the glass diaphragm.

As the cylinder revolves, the recorder is shifted continuously along by a leading screw having one hundred or more threads to the inch cut on it, so that it traces a continuous helical groove from one end of the wax cylinder to the other. This groove is really a series of very minute

indentations, not exceeding $1/1000$ th of an inch in depth. (Some of the sibilant or hissing sounds of the voice are computed to be represented by depressions less than a millionth of an inch in depth. Yet these are reproduced very clearly!) Seen under a microscope, the surface of the record is a succession of hills and valleys, some much larger than others. A loud sound causes the stylus to give a vigorous dig, while low sounds scarcely move it at all. The wonderful thing about this sound-recording is, that not only are the fundamental tones of musical notes impressed, but also the harmonics, which enable us to decide at once whether the record is one of a cornet, violin, or banjo performance. Furthermore, if several instruments are playing simultaneously near the recorder's horn, the stylus catches all the different shades of tone of every note of a chord. There are, so to speak, minor hills and valleys cut in the slopes of the main hills and valleys.

The reproducer (Fig. 149) is somewhat more complicated than the recorder. As before, we have a circular box communicating with the horn of the instrument. A thin glass disc forms a bottom to the box. It is held in position between rubber rings, R R, by a screw collar, C. To the centre is attached a little eye, from which hangs a link, L. Pivoted at P from one edge of the box is a floating weight, having a circular opening immediately under the eye. The link passes through this to the left end of a tiny lever, which rocks on a pivot projecting from the weight. To the right end of the lever is affixed a sapphire bar, or stylus, with a ball end of a diameter equal to that of the cutting point of the recorder. The floating weight presses the stylus against the record, and also keeps the link between the rocking lever of the glass diaphragm in a state of tension. Every blow given to the stylus is therefore transmitted to the diaphragm, which vibrates and sends an air-impulse into the horn. As the impulses are given at the same rate as those which agitated the diaphragm of the recorder, the sounds which they represent are accurately reproduced, even to the harmonics of a musical note.

THE GRAMOPHONE.

This effects the same purpose as the phonograph, but in a somewhat different manner. The phonograph recorder digs vertically downwards into the surface of the record, whereas the stylus of the gramophone wags from side to side and describes a snaky course. It makes no difference in talking-machines whether the reproducing stylus be moved sideways or vertically by the record, provided that motion is imparted by it to the diaphragm.

In Fig 151c the construction of the gramophone reproducer is shown in section. A is the cover which screws on to the bottom B, and confines the diaphragm D between itself and a rubber ring. The portion B is elongated into a tubular shape for connection with the horn, an arm of which slides over the tube and presses against the rubber ring C to make an air-tight joint. The needle-carrier N is attached at its upper end to the centre of the diaphragm. At a point indicated by the white dot a pin passes through it and the cover. The lower end is tubular to accommodate the steel points, which have to be replaced after passing once over a record. A screw, S, working in a socket projecting from the carrier, holds the point fast. The record moves horizontally under the point in a plane perpendicular to the page. The groove being zigzag, the needle vibrates right and left, and rotating the carrier a minute fraction of an inch on the pivot, shakes the glass diaphragm and sends waves of air into the horn.

The gramophone is a reproducing instrument only. The records are made on a special machine, fitted with a device for causing the recorder point to describe a spiral course from the circumference to the centre of the disc. Some gramophone records have as many as 250 turns to the inch.

The total length of the tracing on a ten-inch "concert" record is about 1,000 feet.

THE MAKING OF RECORDS.

For commercial purposes it would not pay to make every record separately in a recording machine. The expense of employing good singers and instrumentalists renders such a method impracticable. All the records we buy are made from moulds, the preparation of which we will now briefly describe.

CYLINDER, OR PHONOGRAPH RECORDS.

First of all, a wax record is made in the ordinary way on a recording machine. After being tested and approved, it is hung vertically and centrally from a rotating table pivoted on a vertical metal spike passing up through the record. On one side of the table is a piece of iron. On each side of the record, and a small distance away, rises a brass rod enclosed in a glass tube. The top of the rods are hooked, so that pieces of gold leaf may be suspended from them. A bell-glass is now placed over the record, table, and rods, and the air is sucked out by a pump. As soon as a good vacuum has been obtained, the current from the secondary circuit of an induction coil is sent into the rods supporting the gold leaves, which are volatized by the current jumping from one to the other. A magnet, whirled outside the bell-glass, draws around the iron armature on the pivoted table, and consequently revolves the record, on the surface of which a very thin coating of gold is deposited. The record is next placed in an electroplating bath until a copper shell one-sixteenth of an inch thick has formed all over the outside. This is trued up on a lathe and encased in a brass tube. The "master," or original wax record, is removed by cooling it till it contracts sufficiently to fall out of the copper mould, on the inside surface of which are reproduced, in relief, the indentations of the wax "master."

Copies are made from the mould by immersing it in a tank of melted wax. The cold metal chills the wax that touches it, so that the mould soon has a thick waxen lining. The mould and copy are removed from the tank and mounted on a lathe, which shapes and smooths the inside of the record. The record is loosened from the mould by cooling. After inspection for flaws, it is, if found satisfactory, packed in cotton-wool and added to the saleable stock.

Gramophone master records are made on a circular disc of zinc, coated over with a very fine film of acid-proof fat. When the disc is revolved in the recording machine, the sharp stylus cuts through the fat and exposes the zinc beneath. On immersion in a bath of chromic acid the bared surfaces are bitten into, while the unexposed parts remain unaffected. When the etching is considered complete, the plate is carefully cleaned and tested. A negative copper copy is made from it by electrotyping. This constitutes the mould. From it as many as 1,000 copies may be made on ebonite plates by combined pressure and heating.

(cont. from p. 2)

Used Books - In some of our earlier issues we offered various old books for sale. During the past year we have endeavored to replenish our stock of titles, to little avail. Inflation has hit the used book business as well, and it is difficult to purchase books at prices lower than those we charge!

Articles from our readers are encouraged and welcome. We are especially interested in locating a collector willing to contribute an article from time to time in the field of jazz/race recordings. This, we feel, would give the GRAPHIC a wider appeal, as well as a better balance.

- 786 - The Sweetest Story Ever Told Venetian Instrumental Trio
 787 - Let's Make Love Among the Roses Arthur C. Clough
 788 - The Vacant Chair Elizabeth Spencer and Chorus
 789 - Winning Flight Two-Step National Promenade Band
 790 - Attila - Praise Ye Bohumir Kryl and His Band
 791 - The Maid of the Mill Reed Miller
 792 - I Like the Hat, I Like the Dress Edward M. Favor and Male Chorus
 793 - Dance -- Caprice, Op. 28, No. 3 (Grieg) / Venetian Instrumental Quartet Billy Murray
 794 - You'll Do the Same Thing Over Again Edison Light Opera Co.
 795 - Pinafore Airs - No. 1 Arthur C. Clough
 796 - Down By the Old Mill Stream National Promenade Band
 797 - Valse Boston Elizabeth Spencer
 798 - Bendemeer's Stream Reed Miller and Frank Croxton
 799 - Martha - Lost, Proscribed Anna Chandler and Male Chorus
 800 - Run Home and Tell Your Mother -
 801 - Day in Venice (Suite) No. 1 (a) Dawn; (b) Gondoliers American Standard Orchestra
 802 - Light Up Your Face With a Smile Walter Van Brunt and Male Chorus
 803 - When The Roll is Called Up Yonder Edison Mixed Quartet
 804 - Dixie Medley Fred Van Epps
 805 - Oh, Tiny, Play That "Traumerei" Evan Baldwin
 806 - Hands Up Ada Jones and Billy Murray
 807 - The Dwellers in the Western World - No. 2, "The White Man" - Sousa's Band
 808 - I'll Remember You, Love, in My Prayers - Will Oakland and Male Chorus
 809 - Good Bye, Sweet Day Bessie Volckmann
 810 - Under Southern Skies Manuel Romain and Chorus
 811 - Memories of Home Venetian Instrumental Trio
 812 - Songs of Harvard Knickerbocker Quartet
 813 - Songs of Yale Knickerbocker Quartet
 814 - All Alone Medley New York Military Band
 815 - Don Juan Overture Edison Concert Band
 816 - Good Bye Reed Miller
 817 - Alexander's Ragtime Band Billy Murray
 818 - Madame Butterfly - Fantasie Victor Sorlin
 819 - Only to See Her Face Again Will Oakland and Male Chorus
 820 - Pinafore Airs - No. 2 Edison Light Opera Co.
 821 - I Will Love You When the Silver Threads Are Shining Among the Gold - Manuel Romain
 822 - At the Mill March Bohumir Kryl and His Band
 823 - Dream Faces Elizabeth Spencer
 824 - Harbor of Love Irving Gillette
 825 - The Old Town is Looking Mighty Good To-night Walter Van Brunt
 826 - Pink Lady - Selection American Standard Orchestra
 827 - The Washington Waddle Premier Quartet
 828 - The Bloom is On the Rye Harry Anthony and James F. Harrison
 829 - L'Elegante Polka Charles Daab
 830 - I Laughed at the Wrong Time Cal Stewart
 831 - The Owl in the Old Oak Tree That Girl Quartet
 832 - I Want a Girl Walter Van Brunt and Male Chorus
 833 - Billy (I Always Dream of Bill) Anna Chandler
 834 - Il Trovatore - Anvil Chorus Edison Light Opera Co.
 835 - The Lord is My Shepherd Reed Miller and Frank Croxton
 836 - Valse Julian American Standard Orchestra
 837 - Woodman, Woodman, Spare That Tree! Bob Roberts
 838 - The Lighthouse By the Sea Knickerbocker Quartet
 839 - The Dwellers in the Western World - No. 3, "The Black Man" - Sousa's Band

MADAME NORDICA OF MAINE

By A. W. Freeman

On December 12, 1857, a baby girl, their sixth, was born to Edwin Norton and the former Amanda Allen of Farmington, Maine. The child was named Lillian Bayard Norton and, under her stage name of "Madame Nordica," was to become one of the most famous operatic sopranos in the history of the world. Her name is still revered today among opera buffs.

With a combination of Scandinavian and Scottish ancestors, small wonder one of the six girls was destined to attain some progress in music, though the parents had no idea their sixth and last child would go so far. However, to help matters along, the mother was a pushy sort who once made the statement that, given a spoon, she would attempt to dig a tunnel through a mountain. As soon as little Lillie showed the slightest musical talent, the mother got behind her with a vengeance, and never ceased to push.

The father was a weakish sort, no match for the determined mother. He attempted farming, failed at it, then tried his hand at running a tavern, also a failure. All the while he pursued his hobbies of amateur fiddling and singing. Luckily, the latter encouraged Lillie's musical interest. Finally, they all packed up and left Farmington for Boston, though Lillian Norton was always to think of her home as Maine, not Massachusetts.

Poor as they were, the Nortons somehow got Lillie entered in the New England Conservatory of Music, under the gifted teacher Professor John O'Neill. No doubt O'Neill was worn down by the onslaught of Lillie's ambitious mother, who would never be satisfied with anything less than the best for her promising daughter. To O'Neill must go all the credit for Lillian Norton's development and success as a singer. For more than just a teacher of voice, he was an artistic, erudite man of vision, able to inspire his students with enthusiasm. At this time, Richard Wagner was considered an upstart in the United States -- O'Neill knew that the German would one day be recognized as a genius, and that Lillian Norton could be the foremost interpreter of his roles, as indeed she became.

Looking at a picture of Lillie taken at this time, one sees a strong, yet sensitive, forceful Nordic face, with prominent chin, nose, and forehead. Her features were a bit too large for her to ever be called beautiful; though handsome she was, in the classic Greek tradition. She had inherited her mother's determination, which was to carry her through life, even as now through Conservatory. She was the only pupil in her beginners' class to survive to the finish.

Meanwhile, the Nortons were putting up a continuous struggle to keep themselves out of the poorhouse and Lillie in the Conservatory. The father worked in a photography shop. The mother worked as a clerk in the Jordan Marsh store. The girls took whatever menial jobs they could find. Even Lillie, in addition to her studies, worked as a clerk. But, in all their minds, Lillie was the reason for it all, the bright and shining star of the future.

Finally the gruelling four years at the Conservatory came to an end. The iron determination Lillian Norton had inherited from her mother had seen her through. They had been rigorous, despairing, deprived years. There had been little time and no money for recreation, scant energy for fun and games. Meals had had to be skipped, to save money. Pretense had had to be put up to keep the fact of their poverty from people, for pride's sake. But the future Nordica had made it, to the joy of herself and everyone. Best of all, there was no doubt in Professor O'Neill's

mind that Lillie was destined for greatness. She was even given the honor of singing at the graduation exercises, flawlessly rendering "Care Campagne" from La Sonnambula.

Now, to be ever after billed as Lillian Nordica, and finally only as Nordica, Lillie was launched on her career. She sang at churches, clubs, halls, any place she could obtain an engagement. All the while continuing to study, as any artist must all of his life. Critical notice varied, but it was mostly favorable. Her name and fame spread slowly. True to Professor O'Neill's prediction, her specialty turned toward the music of Richard Wagner.

She traveled about the United States, accompanied, of course, by her ever-present mother. Money began to come in, improving the family fortunes, though by now several of Nordica's sisters were married. Her father was now a semi-invalid, having been injured in an explosion at the photographic studio. But Nordica, and especially her mother, were not satisfied. It was not enough to be famous in the United States -- one must be recognized in Europe, center of the world's culture.

The opportunity came in 1878. Nordica was only 20 years old, already famous in the United States, and was now about to set off on a European tour. The little nobody from a hick town in Maine had come a long way. But Nordica never forgot her birthplace -- she would always return to it, throughout her life. Before sailing, she sang at a concert for the townspeople in the Farmington Methodist Church. Nordica was always proud of her town and Maine, and unashamed of her humble origins -- one of the reasons she is still fondly remembered today.

Professor O'Neill's judgement was again vindicated -- the Europeans recognized in Nordica a superior singer. Reviews were restrained but generally favorable. And, even though on tour in foreign countries, she continued to study with various eminent teachers in those countries. Her ultimate ambition, of course, was to be accepted in Italy, the home of opera. In preparation for this, she committed to memory no less than ten operas. This prodigious feat could only have been accomplished by dedication, discipline, intelligence, tenacity, and robust health. Nordica had them all; plus, of course, her omnipresent mother, always standing behind her, always shoving firmly.

At last, in 1882, the greatest honor that can come to an opera singer came to Nordica. She was invited to sing at La Scala in Milan. Nothing that can come after this can ever match the thrill of this accomplishment. To a modern-day astronaut, it would be tantamount to being the first man on a planet. To a mountain-climber, it would be the equivalent of scaling Everest.

Fulfilling another of Professor O'Neill's prophecies, Nordica became the foremost female interpreter of her day of the music of Wagner. Even the Germans themselves acclaimed her at the Mecca of Wagnerian music, Bayreuth. It would seem as though Nordica was at the pinnacle of success and happiness. After years of privation, study, and hard work, everything she had ever wanted was apparently hers. Not so.

For Nordica was never to know personal happiness, except through her music. A favorite sister had died of typhoid when they were both in their teens. She tried marriage three times, with disastrous results. Her first husband all but scuttled her career, and caused her to have a nervous breakdown. She never knew the joys of motherhood. She lost that moving force, her mother, in 1891. She had several squabbles with rival singers, and the constant effort of staying ahead of the competition took a toll on her. Fortunately she always enjoyed robust health, and, true to the Wagnerian tradition, was a large, but not fat, woman. She ate well, often putting away every course of a sumptuous meal.

But Nordica's only true personal happiness was through entertaining

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people via her music, and she gave of herself unstintingly. She said, "The reward of a singer is beyond my power to describe." It was her only reward in life.

All things must come to an end. Nordica often said, "A prima donna dies three deaths: when her beauty fades, when her voice fails, and when the breath leaves her body." She was not to escape the three deaths. The final, inevitable one came during her South Seas tour of 1913. Taken sick at Melbourne, her condition rapidly deteriorated. She still continued on to Java, however, when the ship struck a coral reef. It slowly began to sink, and the passengers were evacuated via lifeboats. It was too much for Nordica. Her robust health finally failed her, and she died of pneumonia May 10, 1914, in Java. She was cremated. Then, on May 17, 1943, a Liberty Ship, the USS Lillian Nordica, was launched at South Portland, Maine. It went through World War II unscathed.

Nordica had started a book, "Hints to Singers." In it she said, "There is only one way to sing -- and that is the right way." She was entitled to say it, because she had done it.

Lillian Nordica made a series of records for Columbia, many of which were unissued. You may wish to correspond with Mr. Freeman at: Hayward Road, Box 38, Plainfield, New Hampshire 03781

Leo Hirtz
Antique Phonographs
Box 6
Bernard, Iowa 52032

- RECORDS WANTED -

NEED EDISON GOLD LABEL LONG
PLAY DIAMOND DISC #10001.
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BEE CYLINDERS IN BOXES TO
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something to be desired. Although relatively clear in reproduction, the tone is characterized by a somewhat distant, nasal, "pinched" quality which probably didn't endear the records to the casual purchaser of 1906-1908. But for all their faults, I love them still, and would welcome any additional material that readers can provide, be it from printed material, catalogues, or the records themselves.

And in conjunction with the previous article:

Wanted:

Looking for catalogs of any wholesale or retail concern (among them Henry Siegel Co., Siegel-Cooper, Macy's, John M. Smyth Co., etc.) that may list records with unusual brand names (such as Concert, Faultless Concert, Thomas, etc.); Sears catalogs not needed. Will accept photocopies of appropriate pages. Also required is any information about Radium cylinder records (Leeds & Catlin Co.). Does any reader have any?

Bill Bryant

1046 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04102

More About the Starr Demonstration...

Fred Smith of North Riverside, Illinois, has turned up a third coupling of the Gennett demonstration record for the Starr Phonograph! His copy is coupled with 4811-B, "Lead Kindly Light", by the Criterion Quartette. We now have it coupled with a hymn, a dance tune, and an orchestra piece. (See issue 8)

We hope to include the text of additional demonstration records in future issues.

And About Star...

Just about out of space, but wonder if you can supply the details of any of the following Star Records (from Hawthorne & Sheble):

- 41 through 55, 58, 59, and anything above 60 (with 2 or 3 digits)
- 2022 (10" - may not exist)
- 1266 (12") and above

When these few remaining numbers are located we'll have a complete listing of Stars. More in next issue.

